1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

080 42°. But he feels the cold, and at night, when walking, may be met
513 carrying a glowing ember held close to his navel for warmth, while
374 in camp he sleeps on the ground between two fires, and in house, field-hut or village dormitory sleeps generally on a platform of criss-crossed bamboos or creeper rope with a fire beneath it. He
513 has usually also a sleeping mat or *masni* (Halbi) made of a special grass, which is easily rolled up and carried about when he visits Jagdalpur or a touring officer's camp; or he may use instead of it his *taghali* or bark rain coat. He sleeps generally on his side with his head resting on his arm, the other arm resting on the ground in front with the elbow bent; and he will shift from side to side. It is *polo*, that is taboo, for a woman to sleep on a cot or platform, and she must sleep on the ground in her room in the house.

Bodily attitudes

The Bison-horn Maria has generally a cot to sleep on, and even his wife often has one. In such matters he is getting more and more like the ordinary Hindu villager.

516 For eating or social conversation or resting, the Hill Maria often sits with his buttocks on the ground and his knees drawn up, though he sometimes uses the familiar Indian squatting position, and his women usually squat in this way for mourning at funerals or singing at weddings. The men have also little wooden stools to
[352] sit on, or sit on a stone, as at the commensal feasts; while in the villages where there is the custom of the *gaita* or headman and the *kasyeq-gaita* or Village Mother priest sitting on an *uddamgarya* or seat of honour to preside over meetings of the elders, it is often a flat stone resting on stone legs, on which he sits in ordinary sitting posture. In any group of Hill Marias resting after a meal or on a march you will see almost every attitude that might be adopted by English schoolboys except lying prone on back or stomach. If standing, a favourite position of all the tribes in Bastar is to stand on one foot, the other knee being bent so that the sole of the foot may rest against the outer side of the standing leg, the arm on the same side as the bent knee catching hold of a bough or something for steadiness. Another favourite position is to stand with the left leg braced, the right slightly flexed so that the left hip is extended sideways; the left wrist or knuckles rest on this hip, while the right hand rests on the left shoulder, the right arm being bent at the elbow to look like a V over the chest; or else the right arm is hung loosely at the side, or held in that of the next youth. For fire-
[372] making, they kneel on their knees. They stand to urinate and squat to defecate.

● [514] The Bison-horn Maria uses mostly the same positions, but is more prone to imitate Hindu habits; he squats to urinate.*
*[See cat. 116, p. 418. - Analyst]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

515 the streams for the sexes, and they never bathe together. But the Hill Maria does not know the use of soap; occasionally his women follow the practice of the plains women and scour their hair with a plaster of black earth well rinsed out later. His nails are generally long and very dirty. The infant and the toddler are occasionally washed with water from a gourd. Where there is no stream near or water is scarce, the daily ablutions are often performed with water dipped from an earthen water-pot with a [415] gourd ladle, called *paghas* by the Hill Marias and *orka* in the plains, made from a gourd shaped like a large European smoking pipe; the straight stem is hollow and holed at the end; the stem is held near the bowl between the chin and collar-bone or shoulder and water tilted down from the bowl on to the body by dropping the other shoulder, while the hands rub the limb thus wetted. Needless to say, ablutions thus performed are not very effective.

The Bison-horn Maria also on occasion 'washes' with the ladle, but generally is cleaner than the Hill Maria, and is beginning to buy cheap soap in the bazaars. He will wash his hands before a meal, unlike the hill man. He has his daily dip, but generally in the evening only; and the women definitely bathe only in the evening on their way back from the fields. Both bathe naked, but they wash their clothes far more readily than the Hill Maria, living indeed in the 'bazaar' plains with several Mahra weavers in their midst.^

514 The Hill Maria, unlike the Hindu, does not wash after defecation, but wipes himself with leaves. The plainsman is learning the 515 Hindu habit. Neither a Hill nor a Bison-horn village is ever as noisome as the average Hindu village of so 'advanced' a tract as the Maratha country of Nagpur or Berar, where at night the village streets are used as a public latrine and it is difficult to pass clean-shod in the morning. The Hill Maria generally retires into the jungle to ease himself, and the Bison-horn either does the same or uses the *bari* or vegetable garden at the back of his house.

356 A Hill Maria's house is really clean only for the first month or 361 two after it is made, and there is no regular re-plastering of the floors with cow-dung and mud. The interior is rapidly grimed with smoke and dust; and if the Maria has any article he wishes to keep clean he stores it up a tree or in his granary. But his house seldom has to last him more than four or five years, after which, his *penda* slope being exhausted, he and the other villagers move their houses to one of the alternative village sites, and his old house is ultimately burnt, either deliberately or as a matter of course in the annual firing of the forest grasses. The Bison-horn Maria, on the other hand, is now a dweller in permanent habitations, save for an occasional shift for superstitious reasons. His houses are therefore

^[See CA1.116 pp. 418-419. - Analyst]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

him. He has, however, to cook food for his wife. The latter during ordinary menstrual periods stays, in villages where there are menstrual rooms or private and not communal menstruation huts, on her side of the mud threshold and keeps there special water-pots and cooking pots; her husband brings food and water in the regular pots, and, standing on his non-taboo side of the mud threshold, pours their contents into the menstruation water and cooking pots. But as he may never touch the latter, he cannot use them for preparing food for his wife after child-birth, and so has to buy a special set of pots for cooking her food then, which are destroyed at the end of her period of seclusion. Nor is the husband permitted to enter the ordinary rooms of the house until the child's navel-cord has fallen off; he has to build a temporary room at the back of the house near the menstruation room or hut, and cook there. It is taboo for him to give any other person any fire from the hearth in this temporary kitchen. Breach of the taboos attaching to child-birth by either parent is believed to entail the wrath of the Village Mother. During the period of seclusion the mother is permitted to leave the room only to bury the placenta or to answer the call of nature. As it is taboo for her to pick or break anything growing during the period, she has before her delivery to lay in enough leaves for cleaning herself after defecation to last for the full period. She wears nothing but the *mudang* until the end of the period.

After the navel-cord has fallen off or at the end of the period of seclusion, the mother goes out at night to the river, immerses herself, and cleans her old loin-cloth and the cloth of her *mudang*. In the early morning she emerges wearing her loin-cloth and carrying her baby, which in most villages her husband then sees for the first time; around Handawada, however, he is allowed to see it in the menstruation room on the morning after it is born. The mother has to sprinkle every part of the house with water.

From birth to death there is no age ceremony of any kind, neither at birth, naming, weaning, ear-boring, hair-cutting, puberty, first shaving, nor on any other occasion. Normally the child gets no name until it is two or three years old, when its parents know its physique and something of its character. But there are three exceptions to this. When the child is brought out from the place where it was born at the end of the initial period of seclusion, it is examined for birth-marks; and if these are considered to be the same as those of a dead ancestor it is given that ancestor's name, or, if, for example, the child is a boy and has his father's mother's birth-marks, it gets her husband's name. Thus Usendi Moda, the headman of Orcha, was called after his dead grandfather because he had the same mole on his hip as he;

Naming

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

●514 For defecation, the Muria go into the fields or jungle. Their villages are always clean of human excreta; if a child relieves itself in the house, the mother immediately cleans the place and sprinkles ash over it. One of the instructions given by Lingo in the first ghotul was that the boys and girls should never relieve themselves on the paths. Moreover since they do not wash themselves with water after defecation, the banks of streams or rivers are usually clean—in striking contrast to the horrible condition of streams near many a more 'advanced' village.

[824] After defecation the Muria clean themselves with leaves, but they do not use siari, saja, char, sarai, tendu or karmata leaves for this. The saja is, of course, sacred; the tendu also is connected with Lingo. Sarai, karmata and siari leaves are used as leaf-plates.

A strict rule against urinating in the ghotul greatly helps to preserve its cleanliness and freshness. The rule is not, however, universal. In a few ghotul there are little holes in the wall down near the floor which are used as urinals. In others, though the children are not allowed to urinate inside the building, they may do so against the fence. Generally both boys and girls [524] stand to urinate—a fact which gives point to the riddle: 'Shoot the arrow with all your might, yet it still falls beneath your feet.'[1]

V. Tobacco

276 In many ghotul, the distribution of tobacco is an important part of the evening ritual. As the girls go round for Johar, the Belosa and her assistant ✕883 put a few pinches of finely-powdered tobacco into the chelik's hands. One of the boys has the special duty of seeing that there is a proper supply and that the girls prepare it daily.

The legendary origin of tobacco is described in a story from Kachora.

> Long ago a party of Muria went to visit the Maharaja during Dassera. On their way they came to a spot where a barren woman had been cremated. This woman had been very beautiful, but no one cared for her—for who goes to a withered tree for shelter from the sun? She complained to Nandraj and he said, 'Though they take no notice of you now, once you are dead they won't be able to get on without you.' So after her death, a beautiful plant sprung from her ashes.
>
> One of the party went to relieve himself and saw the plant. He picked a leaf and began to chew it. He found it sweet and distributed it to the others. On his way home, he went to get more leaves, but found the plant had dried. So he took the seeds and planted them in his garden. When the leaves were ready he chewed them and felt a little drunk. The feeling was so pleasant that whenever he had no leaves in his mouth he longed for them. This is why tobacco is called *surti* [after the Chhattisgarhi word *surta*, longing or remembrance].
>
> Every morning tobacco plants give off a sort of smoke because of the dew that settles on the leaves during the night. So the tobacco used in a leaf-pipe is called *dungya*, or smoke.[2]

The chelik, and still more their elders, suffer to the full this *surta*, or longing for tobacco, which they either chew or smoke in small tightly rolled leaf-

[1] The Muria ghotul is generally much less odorous than the Uraon dhumkuria I visited. A writer has described the inner room of the Ao Naga *morung* which is used as a urinal as 'emitting such an obnoxious smell that it makes even the second room unfit for entrance'.—S. N. Majumdar, 'The Ao Nagas', *Man in India*, Vol. IV (1924), p. 53.

[2] Cf. the Kond story on p. 308.